

물방울 그리는 남자

The man who paints water drops



**A film by
Oan Kim & Brigitte Bouillot**

**Produced by Clarisse Tupin / Paraiso Production
&
Kim Young / Miru Pictures, Inc.**

Synopsis



Documentary
79 minutes
Colors HD
French, Korean
DCP, 5.1
2020
N°Visa 152.240
Subtitles ENG, KO

A son tries to understand his father through the obsession that has occupied most of his life: painting water drops. This symbol of a certain Asian serenity will gradually reveal a tragic origin, anchored in the troubled history of his country.

In 1971, Kim Tschang Yeul painted his first drop of water. Since then, this famous Korean artist has never painted anything else: small drops, big drops, hyper realistic ones, abstract ones, and so on. A work like a form of asceticism, a meditative practice, an alchemist's work, that aims to transform the violence of the world into crystalline drops of water.

Shrouded in his silence, the man is like a Sphinx, a living enigma. The film sets out to peel out the different layers that hide beneath the image of the old sage.

Along the way, his life, his secrets, his unique history gradually echo the universality of man, his quest for meaning and transmission.

Snippets



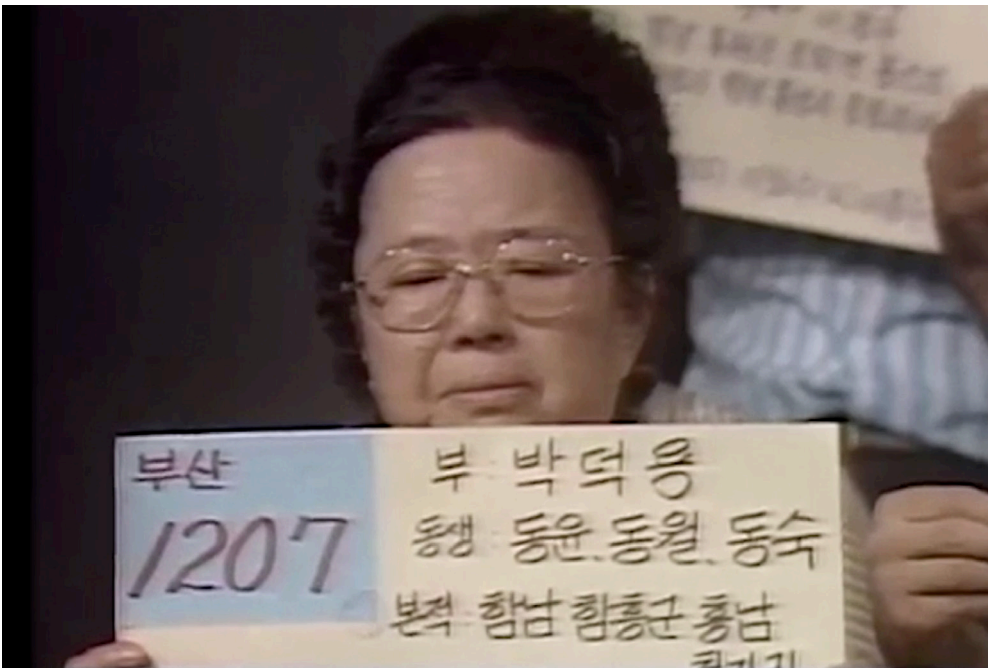
*« Paintings are silent
It may be one of their most obvious
qualities, that makes them access
our inner life, they penetrate our intimacy
But how do you paint a scream
in painting? »*

Snippets



*«He painted his first water drop in 1971.
Since that day, he has painted nothing else.
To paint a drop of water is an idea.
To paint a hundred drops or even a thousand
let's call it "a project".
But painting ten thousand drops of water and
painting a hundred thousand... What kind of
man must one be to subject oneself to such ser-
vitude?
Is it simply about patience?
Extreme ambition? Slight madness?
Or is it enough to be deeply spiritual?»*

Snippets



*« Life in this village, lost amongst the mountains,
taught me many things.
The taste of purity and a form of innocence.
Later in life, i truly missed my village.
I missed it very much... All throughout my life »*

Kim Tschang-Yeul, 91, Dies; Painted Water Drops Swollen With Meaning

Hailing from South Korea, he became an international art star with luminous images informed by Eastern philosophy and the trauma of war.



Kim Tschang-Yeul in the 1990s in his studio in Seoul. His famous water drop paintings brought him international acclaim. via Gallery Hyundai

By Andrew Russeth

Published Jan. 15, 2021 Updated Jan. 19, 2021

SEOUL, South Korea — Kim Tschang-Yeul, who devoted a half century to creating luminous paintings of water drops that are informed by the trauma of war and Eastern philosophy, died here on Jan. 5. He was 91.

Excerpt from the article / Published Jan.15, 2021

Rendered with meticulous care, Mr. Kim’s drops can seem to sit miraculously atop his raw canvases or be in the midst of gliding down them, leaving a trail of moisture. They glimmer with light and cast shadows, and while vividly present, they are always on the verge of evanescing. They made Mr. Kim one of the most celebrated Korean artists of his time.

Versed in Zen Buddhism and Taoism, he wrote in a statement for a 1988 exhibition that his aim in his tranquil paintings was “to dissolve everything into drops of water and return it transparently into nothingness.”

“When we have turned anger, unease, and fear into emptiness,» he wrote, “we can experience peace and harmony.”

Reviewing a monograph of Mr. Kim’s work last June, Jason Farago wrote in The New York Times, “For Mr. Kim,” these water works “effect a strange melding of hyperrealism and abstraction, always trying but never succeeding to come to terms with the past.”

How did this project come about?

Oan Kim: My father was getting very old and we lived in different continents. I felt like it was a good use of the time he had left to do a project about him. It allowed me to spend more time with him and ask all the questions I wanted to ask. Everyone should do this!

Growing up in France I always felt that my father was misunderstood. He was too foreign, and his silence especially made him opaque to a lot of people. French people are not very comfortable with silence! So with this film I wanted to fill in the blanks.

Why did you involve Brigitte Bouillot as co-director on such a personal project?

Oan Kim: I quickly realized that the proximity to the subject could be a source of blindness. How to have the lucidity, the necessary distance, when habits have solidified the relationship in a thousand ways? The need to involve a collaborator then became all the more important.

I had worked with Brigitte on several projects before so I asked her to give me a hand, not knowing that it would involve working on this project for the next 4 years.

How does one go about making a film about one's own father?

Oan Kim: The relationship I have with my father is marked by Korean style Confucianism where we always owe respect to

our elders. It is a relationship that from a Western point of view may seem cold or distant but where complicity is played out in a more subdued way.

Now my mother is also french and I grew up in this country known for cutting the heads off of kings and with a conflicting relationship to authority in general.

I think we were respectful and understated in our approach, but also inquisitive and truthful even where things got a bit uncomfortable. The thing we constantly had in the back of our minds early on was to not make a hagiographic film.

Brigitte Bouillot, how did you find your place in such an intimate film?

Brigitte B : The intimate and universal nature of this project, of a son who tells the story of his father requires a use of intimacy that Oan out of natural modesty would tend to dismiss. My presence in this project was therefore to help him approach this aspect and to seek with him where and how to express these father-son links, but also to reveal together the clues, the gaps, the madness of an era that connects world History with that of a man who fights with determination and will end up finding his place in History thanks to a few droplets of water.

What was Kim Tschang-Yeul's involvement in the making of this film?

Brigitte: he didn't question our project, always responded favorably to our requests for filming, or interviews, even if

sometimes he did not answer questions as we can see in the film. He observed our preparations, silent but present, very present, then at one point he forgot us and his gaze plunged into his painting, and it's like we were no longer there, nor anyone.

Oan K: he never commented one way or another about it. You could have called it indifference if he hadn't also been so available for us.

What difficulties did you encounter during the making of this film?

Oan K: My father was born in a small village in North Korea that meant a lot to him.

So naturally we tried to go and film there, it would have made for a dramatic third act!

We tried through many different intermediaries (including the ministry for reunification, a phone company, a catholic priest and a danish producer), to find a way to film there, but the best we got was a short message saying we should be patient.

Brigitte B: North Korea also didn't allow us to use some of their tv footage of a missile test launch. It was one of our best scenes!

Oan Kim is a filmmaker, photographer and musician. He studied video and photography at Paris National School of Fine Arts (ENSBA), and music composition at the Paris National Conservatory (CNSMDP). His work as a director ranges from video Art installations to institutional films and music videos.

With twenty solo exhibitions and numerous group shows across the world, he alternates subjects close to traditional documentary and formal and conceptual experiments closer to the Art world, exploring the moving boundaries between reality that's represented and the subjectivity that accounts for it.

He is co-founder of the M.Y.O.P photography agency, created in 2005.

Brigitte Bouillot is a filmmaker, photographer and scenographer based in Paris. she studied visual arts at the "Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts" in Dijon, in the audiovisual department.

She co-founded the group La Bouillot Le Morand to design Art installations mixing photography, video and sound. She taught at the Beaux-Arts school in Paris and at ENS Cachan in the Images Department. In 2000, she co-founded Le Potager, a label that brings together directors, photographers and graphic designers to develop projects that combine photography and video for scenographic purposes. She has accompanied The «Groupe Ouest» (Film Lab), for photography, scenography and short documentary films (Any Resemblance) since its creation in 2004.



Credits



A film by
Oan Kim et Brigitte Bouillot

Produced By
Clarisse Tupin

Coproduction with Young Kim
&
Martine Kim



Clarisse



Young

Images
Oan Kim et Brigitte Bouillot

Music, sound
Oan Kim

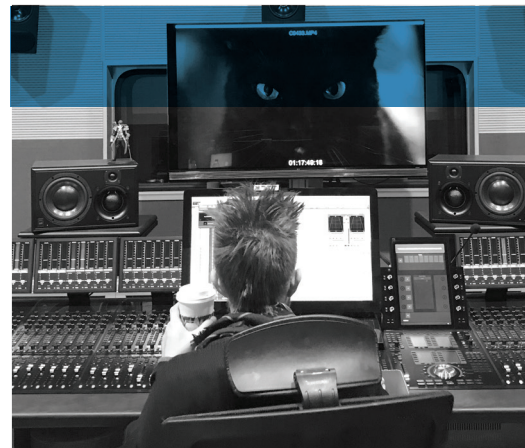


Martine

Editing
Nassim Gordji-Tehrani
Oan Kim
Brigitte Bouillot

Sound editing
Alexandre Hecker

Mixing
Jules Wysocki



Nassim

Alexandre



Jules

